

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. A method for provisioning a circuit via a plurality of network elements comprising:
 - 5 (a) graphically representing said network elements within a network as a plurality of network element objects;
 - (b) graphically representing a communications link between two network elements as a bridge object disposed between two of said plurality of network element objects; and
- 10 (c) graphically representing the status of cross-connection links within said network elements as an icon displayed on each of said linked network element objects; wherein
said network element objects and bridge objects may be manipulated to form a graphical representation of a desired circuit.
- 15 2. The method of claim 1, wherein the icon is selected from the group consisting of a set of colors, a set of images, shapes, symbols, objects, and text.
- 20 3. The method of claim 2, wherein the icon is a set of colors and each color of said set corresponds to a particular connection state and cross-connection state within each network element.
4. The method of claim 3 wherein the set of colors consists of a list of seven colors.
- 25 5. The method of claim 1, wherein each bridge object has at least one communications link, each communications link comprising at least one channel for establishing a communication path between two of the plurality of network elements.
- 30 6. A graphical user interface (GUI), comprising:

a plurality of network element objects, each network element object representing a respective element within a network and having a status icon associated with the network element object;

5 a plurality of bridge objects, representing a respective communications channel within the network; wherein:

in response to a user selection of a network element object, the network element corresponding to the selected network object is selected for use in a circuit; and its corresponding status icon displays information as to the status of a communications channel between the network element and a second network

10 element.

7. The GUI of claim 6, wherein each bridge object further comprises at least one communications link object, each communications link object comprising at least one channel object, each channel object representing the communication

15 channel.

8. The GUI of claim 6, wherein the status icon is selected from the group consisting of colors, shapes, symbols, objects and text.

20 9. The GUI of claim 8, wherein the colors represent the status of a communications channel between the first network element and the second network element.

10. The GUI of claim 9, wherein a first color represents a cross-connection

25 locally in a management system database not yet set to a network element.

11. The GUI of claim 10, wherein said first color is black.

12. The GUI of claim 9, wherein a second color represents an active

30 connection created by CIT/EMS.

13. The GUI of color 12, wherein said second color is green.

14. The GUI of claim 9, wherein a third color represents a pending communications channel.

15. The GUI of claim 14, wherein said third color is gray.

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16. The GUI of claim 9, wherein a fourth color represents a partial communications channel state.

17. The GUI of claim 16, wherein said fourth color is red.

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18. The GUI of claim 9, wherein a fifth color represents an improper disconnect state of the communications channel.

19. The GUI of claim 18, wherein said fifth color is orange.

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20. The GUI of claim 9, wherein a sixth color represents an "intent to delete" state of the communications channel.

21. The GUI of claim 20, wherein said sixth color is magenta.